

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES



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STATE OF MISSISSIPPI

October 19, 2011

The Honorable Julius Genachowski
The Honorable Mignon Clyburn
The Honorable Robert McDowell
The Honorable Michael Copps
Commissioners, Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, D.C. 20554

Dear Chairman Genachowski and Commissioners,

AT&T's request to merge with T-Mobile USA is more than simply a matter of improving broadband service or offering faster online speeds for our country's wireless customers. It is an opportunity to improve public safety and expedite disaster responses. With that in mind, I respectfully urge you to put your full support behind the effort.

My colleagues on the Mississippi Legislature's Committee on the Gulf Coast Disaster and I know all too well the necessity of reliable, real-time communication during a crisis. With the right communication, communities, families, and businesses can access the services and help they need as quickly as possible. But when communication fails, chaos ensues. The result is a disaster followed by a similarly disastrous response, which leaves individuals isolated and unaided, thereby extending the initial crisis.

The technology improvements resulting from the AT&T and T-Mobile merger can help make certain that doesn't happen. AT&T, once merged with T-Mobile USA, will establish a 4G LTE network that cover 95 percent of Mississippi's residents. For our state, that's the equivalent of 1.1 million people in Mississippi alone who will gain access to LTE technology.

The benefits, including faster speeds, better service, greater access, and improved cell coverage, will improve these citizens' everyday lives. More importantly, it will help ensure that, if their lives are once again interrupted by the devastation of a natural or manmade disaster, government aid groups and first responders will be able to communicate and coordinate a response effort quickly and smoothly.

Please consider, Commissioner Genachowski, that the value of this merger's technology can scarcely be understated for Mississippi. I again request your support.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Richard Bennett".

Representative Richard Bennett
District 120, Mississippi House of Representatives